



2018

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy



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STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING POLICY

1.0 Rationale

Warrnambool Special Developmental School's Student Engagement Policy (SEP) articulates the school community's shared expectations in the areas of student engagement, attendance and behaviour. The policy supports the rights and articulates the expectations of every member of the school community to engage in and promote a safe and inclusive educational environment.

Warrnambool SDS is committed to providing safe, secure and stimulating learning environment. Students can reach their full educational potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture to engage and support them in their learning. Student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked and our school aims to promote an understanding of this link in both the school environment and in the classroom. It is fundamental to acknowledge that each teacher is a vital source of support and a determinant in the success of their students.

2.0 Implementation

Our school aims to ensure that every student achieves their by:

- Creating a child safe and friendly learning environment where students have a right to feel and be safe. The wellbeing of the students in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse.
- Collaboratively developing and implementing a fair and respectful whole school engagement and behaviour support approach
- Including pro-social values and behaviour within curriculum delivery to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement
- Providing students with a sense of ownership of their environment, promoting active student participation and voice
- Supporting families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners
- Promoting active student participation to improve student outcomes and engagement
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of students who require social/emotional and educational support
- Promoting the participation and empowerment of students
- Identifying and responding to individual students who require additional assistance and support
- Implementing preventative and early intervention approaches
- Building strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators
- Providing evidence based systems and interventions for accountability
- Creating learning communities
- Providing a stimulating and secure learning environment



3.0 School Profile Statement

Warrnambool Special Developmental School is a state government education facility in the South-Western Victoria Region (SWVR). It is funded under the Program for Students with Disabilities for students with an intellectual disability. The criteria for enrolment are determined by the Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD). It caters for students who have an IQ below 70 as well as significant deficits in adaptive behaviour and displaying a history and evidence of an ongoing problem, with the expectation of continuation during the school years.

Enrolments have increased from 78 in 2010 to the current 130 with the largest ever intake of prep students occurring in 2014. This increasing trend is a concern for the school as it has outgrown its site. There is a core building used for administration with numerous relocatables all situated on the side of a steep hill. The school has taken over the vacated Warrnambool SC school hall and this has enabled another learning space.

However to ensure a safe, secure and orderly environment for the entire school site there has been a need for strategic levelling of the ground as well as having relocatables erected on stilts. Costly ramping has been done to access the relocatable used for the two prep classrooms. Considerable buildings and grounds improvements have been prioritised. In 2014 the school received a DEECD maintenance grant for repair of roof leaks and to restore buildings to a suitable condition. The school employs a full time maintenance person who is responsible for continually adapting the school environment and assisting with resourcing school programs. Recess and lunch breaks are staggered as all the students cannot safely access the play areas at the same time.

The students and their families, which may be single or dual parent, foster, or respite care, come from a wide range of socio economic backgrounds. The student family occupation (SFO) density was 0.56 in 2012 and 0.63 in 2014 and 0.69 in 2017. The SFOE Index in 2017 was 0.63. Often a high level of support is required to address medical, social and educational issues both at an individual student and/or family level. Student absences are high with the greatest number of absences relate to medical issues.

The school has developed a vision and mission statement which is printed on the school website. Regular mention in the newsletters occurs. These together with the school values of integrity in all actions, trust, cooperation, respect, self-esteem, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, humour and courage are embedded in all the school policies and practices.

4.0 Whole School Prevention Statement

Warrnambool SDS follows School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support Professional Learning and Compliance Training. This creates a positive school culture with a focus on relationships and establishes a learning community providing multiple and diverse opportunities.

- Builds a safe and supportive school environment where students feel safe and supported with high teacher expectations and fair and respectful whole school behaviour management systems
- Expects positive, supportive and respected relationships that value diversity where teachers know their students, encourage students to take responsibility and provides multiple opportunities for parents/carers to play an active part in the life of the school.
- Promotes pro-social values and behaviours that assist young people to engage with the school, peers and teachers with the Victorian Curriculum that encourage working with others and for students to take responsibility.
- Encourages student participation by providing all students with opportunities to contribute and provide feedback resulting in feeling valued and empowered including involvement in what and how they learn and how learning is assessed.



5.0 Student Engagement Definition

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students at our school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school.

The partnership and communication between home and school is central to student attendance and effective engagement in instruction and learning. Student engagement can be defined by three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

- **Behavioural engagement** refers to student's participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities within the school program
- **Emotional engagement** encompasses student's emotional reactions while in the classroom and school environment. It defines the student's sense of belonging or connectedness to the school
- **Cognitive engagement** relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-regulation

6.0 Learning and Teaching

Warrnambool SDS engages students to succeed in a highly effective learning environment by:

- Building a shared vision as a Learning Community (use of data, collaboration and focus on learning) which reflects consistent expectations implemented within classrooms across the school.
- Using evidence and data, including Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) and the Victorian Curriculum to identify priority learning and essential content and monitor student learning growth
- Engaging in rich and collaborative partnerships with parents to develop and monitor Individual Learning Plans for students which outline specific and relevant goals
- Using research based best practice, collaboration and reflective practice in Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to identify and implement highly effective and consistent instructional practice across each section of the school
- Aligning resources to support the identification and intervention of students needs for educational, social and emotional support

7.0 Key Strategies and Tools for Engagement include:

- **1:1 iPad for staff and students** – promotes whole school modelling of student voice with Touch Chat
- **Individual Learning Plans (ILP)** – Supported by data and evidence and developed in consultation with parents/caregivers, this identifies priority learning and informs classroom curriculum design
- **Sensory Programs** – Optimise learning readiness, employing specific strategies to assist in regulating behaviour for increased engagement in learning
- **Classroom Environments** – To compliment primary intervention strategies classroom and school environments are structured in a range of ways to accommodate differentiated learning such as classroom break spaces, zones and engine rooms.
- **Visual Supports** - Visual supports are provided within the classroom and in all external learning spaces to ensure students have a voice. Visual supports can range from proloquo2go core words, individual symbol stick symbols, Boardmaker symbols and a range of Alternate augmentative communication systems.
- **Technology** – Compliments the learning styles of many students, enables broader access to the curriculum and promotes increased engagement and motivation



- **Enrichment Programs** – Cater to students personal strengths and interests and currently include: performing arts, art, physical education, dance therapy, music therapy, choir and library
- **Inclusion** – Students dual-enrolled at local primary schools are provided with inclusion opportunities where appropriate within the host school
- **Contexts for learning**– Students across the whole school are offered the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of engaging activities external to their classroom. These are student lead activities which focus on motivation, engagement and connection to real learning in a range of environments.
- **Camp** –All students have the opportunity to attend an annual camp.
- **Electives** – All students access weekly electives across the school where they participate in a variety of programs based on interests and strengths

8.0 Behaviour Support

Highly effective instructional support underpinned by positive behaviour practices and interventions is the foundation for improving student learning growth.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes.

SWPBS emphasises four integrated elements:

- Data for decision making,
- Measurable outcomes supported and evaluated by data,
- Practices with evidence that these outcomes are achievable,
- Systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices

Positive behaviour support is a crucial aspect of teaching practice resulting in high levels of student engagement.

Social skills development promotes the management of students own behaviour within the school environment and the wider community.

Warrnambool SDS aims to develop all students' self-esteem leading to greater independence.

Programs provide a positive and consistent approach to the management of behaviours which may result in disengagement or interrupt the students' learning.

Positive behaviour support focuses on a school wide multi-tiered approach:

- Primary behaviour support: focus on preventative proactive strategies that encourage engagement and teach skills to manage and regulate behaviour. Every student has an individual support plan which identifies current skill level, potential difficulties and strategies and resources to support successful learning and engagement.



- Secondary behaviour support: students who require additional resources to acquire social skills will have an individual behaviour support plan developed in partnership with families.
- Tertiary behaviour support: students may require external assistance from outside the school specifically targeting high risk behaviours. The behaviour plan is managed within a group forum including the involvement of external agencies. The behaviour plan will be reviewed to include a functional behaviour analysis and behaviour response plan for escalated high risk behaviours. This plan is reviewed monthly with relevant key people.

Currently this framework includes the Positive Behaviour Support Policy. The framework will be systematically updated to include associated policies and protocols developed in line with this framework.

The Positive Behaviour Support Policy outlines the processes in place to support engagement and wellbeing in addressing behaviour support across all school environments.

We have a proactive approach to promoting student wellbeing and engagement through:

- Developing a Student Wellbeing team consisting of:
 - Wellbeing Team Leader
 - Student Counsellor
 - Network Psychologist
- Forums to discuss, resource and collaborate on all issues relating to engagement and wellbeing
 - Fortnightly wellbeing meetings
 - Weekly leadership meetings
 - Weekly school section meetings
- Student Support Group Meetings
- A wide range of parent forums and information sessions conducted throughout the school year
 - A holiday program run by mpower.

Ratified at School Council: **18/04/2017**

Review Date: **26/07/2019**